

REMARKS

Claims 1-14, 16-18 and 20-36 have been examined.

I. Allowable Subject Matter

The Examiner has indicated that claims 11-14 and 16 are allowed and claims 7, 8, 9/7 and 9/8 contain allowable subject matter, but are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim.

II. Preliminary Matters

Applicant respectfully requests the Examiner to return an initialed PTO 1449 form for the August 12, 2005 Information Disclosure Statement. Applicant have viewed the USPTO PAIR system and confirms that the IDS is available for the Examiner to review.

The Examiner has objected to the figures as not showing reference numerals 123 and 124. Accordingly, Applicant has amended the specification to conform to the reference numerals shown in the figures. Due to the amendments, no drawing amendments are necessary. Applicant submits that no new matter has been added.

Also, the Examiner has objected to claim 17 as being in improper dependent form. Accordingly, Applicant has amended claim 17 in a manner believed to overcome the objection. Applicant submits that claim 17 is patentable at least by virtue of its incorporation of the allowable features of claim 11.

III. Rejections under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph

The Examiner has rejected claims 1-9, 18, 20 and 21 under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph as allegedly being indefinite. Applicant submits that the amended claims fully comply with the requirements of 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph.

IV. Rejections under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) in view of JP 8-156351 to Sato (“Sato”)

The Examiner has rejected claims 1, 2, 9, 10, 18, 20, 21, 35 and 36 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by Sato.

A. Claim 1

Applicant submits that claim 1 is patentable over the cited reference. For example, claim 1 recites that side edges of a sucking chamber extending in a transporting direction of the medium are provided with flared slant faces.

Applicant submits that the flared side edges correspond to a cockling wave of the medium. In particular, cockling of the medium generates a wave shape along the main scanning direction. If the sucking chamber has the flared slant faces, along the main scanning direction (i.e., transporting direction), the section shape will correspond to the cockling wave. Thus, a bottom of the cockling wave formed in the medium can be accommodated in the sucking chamber more suitably.

Applicant submits that the alleged sucking chamber of Sato, as depicted on page 4 of the Office Action and Figure 6 of Sato, does not contain side edges having *flared* slant faces that extend in a transporting direction of the medium, as recited in claim 1.

For at least the foregoing reasons, Applicant submits that claim 1 is patentable over the cited reference.

B. Claims 2 and 9

Since claims 2 and 9 are dependent upon claim 1, Applicant submits that such claims are patentable at least by virtue of their dependency.

C. Claim 10

Applicant submits that claim 10 is patentable for at least analogous reasons as set forth above for claim 1.

D. Claim 18

Applicant submits that claim 18 is patentable over the cited reference. For example, claim 18 has been amended to recite a plurality of dimples formed on a medium transportation service. A depth of each dimple is gradually decreased toward an edge thereof. Further, claim 18 recites that a sucking hole is formed in each dimple. Applicant submits that such features are not disclosed in the Sato reference.

E. Claims 20 and 21

Since claim 20 has been canceled, without prejudice or disclaimer, Applicant submits that the rejection of such claim is now moot.

In regard to claim 21, Applicant submits that such claim is patentable at least by virtue of its incorporation of the features of claim 18.

F. Claims 35 and 36

Applicant submits that claims 35 and 36 are patentable for at least analogous reasons as claim 1. Further, claim 36 recites that an *entire periphery* of the sucking chamber is provided with the flared slant faces. Applicant submits that Sato also fails to teach or suggest this further feature.

V. Rejections under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) in view of Sato and U.S. Patent No. 6,179,285 to Teumer et al. (“Teumer”)

The Examiner has rejected claims 3, 5, 6 and 9 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Sato in view of Teumer. Since claims 3, 6 and 9 are dependent upon claim 1, and Teumer fails to cure the deficient teachings of Sato, in regard to claim 1, Applicant submits that such claims are patentable at least by virtue of their dependency. Further, since claim 5 has been canceled, without prejudice or disclaimer, Applicant submits that the rejection of such claim is now moot.

VI. Rejections under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) in view of Sato and JP 07-009712 to Kanemura (“Kanemura”)

The Examiner has rejected claims 22-27 and 28 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Sato in view of Kanemura. However, since such claims are dependent upon claim 1, and Kanemura fails to cure the deficient teachings of Sato, in regard to claim 1, Applicant submits that such claims are patentable at least by virtue of their dependency.

VII. Rejections under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) in view of Sato and U.S. Patent No. 6,196,672 to Ito et al. (“Ito”)

The Examiner has rejected claims 29-34 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Sato in view of Ito.

A. Claim 29

Applicant submits that claim 29 is patentable over the cited reference. For example, claim 29 recites that a chamfer is provided in at least one of an air inlet portion and an air outlet portion in each sucking hole, where the sucking holes are formed in a sucking chamber.

The Examiner acknowledges that Sato fails to disclose the claimed chamfer, but contends that Ito does. However, as shown in Figure 4 of Ito, the portion 36 is a gap or slit formed by bending a plate member. Applicant submits that the bent portion of the plate member fails to disclose a *chamfer*. Since Ito fails to cure the deficient teachings of Sato, Applicant respectfully requests the Examiner to reconsider and withdraw the rejection of claim 29.

B. Claims 30-34

Since claims 30-34 are dependent upon claim 29, Applicant submits that such claims are patentable at least by virtue of their dependency.

VIII. Newly Added Claim

Applicant has added claim 37. Applicant submits that such claim is patentable at least by virtue of its dependency.

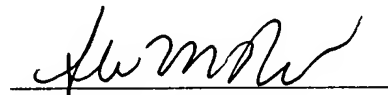
Amendment under 37 C.F.R. 1.114(c)
U.S. Application No. 10/798,480

IX. Conclusion

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

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